

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently Amended) A gum base composition comprising biodegradable ingredients, wherein said biodegradable ingredients include a lactic acid polymer, which contains no lactic acid polymers other than poly-L-lactic acid polymer having a glass transition temperature of 55° to 80° C, in an amount of from 5% by weight to ~~60~~50% by weight, and an emulsifying plasticizer in an amount of from ~~[[1]]~~4% by weight to ~~20~~19% by weight.

2. (Previously presented) The gum base composition according to claim 1, wherein the content of said lactic acid polymer is from 10% by weight to less than 50% by weight.

3. (Currently Amended) The gum base composition according to claim 1 or 2, wherein said lactic acid polymer has a weight average molecular weight of 50,000 to 200,000 ~~and a crystallinity of 20% or less.~~

4. (Cancelled)

5. (Cancelled)

6. (Canceled)

7. (Previously presented) The gum base composition according to claim 1, which contains an acetylated monoglyceride as said emulsifying plasticizer.

8. (Previously Presented) The gum base composition according to claim 7, wherein the ratio by weight of said lactic acid polymer to the acetylated monoglyceride is from 90:10 to 80:20.

9. (Currently Amended) The gum base composition according to claim 1, wherein ~~all ingredients of said composition is biologically degradable~~the gum base consists of biologically degradable ingredients.

10. (Currently Amended) A method of producing a gum base composition comprising biodegradable ingredients, which comprises steps of heat kneading and softening a lactic acid polymer having a glass transition temperature of 55° to 80° C, which contains no lactic acid polymers other than poly-L-lactic acid polymer, in a pressure kneader, and homogenizing the resulting softened lactic acid polymer by adding an emulsifying plasticizer to it, said biodegradable ingredients containing lactic acid polymers in an amount of from 5% by weight to less than ~~60~~50% by weight.

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11. (Currently Amended) The method of producing a gum base composition according to claim 10, wherein the temperature of said pressure kneader is ~~120-110°~~ to ~~130°~~120°C.

12. (Cancelled)

13. (Cancelled)

14. (Previously presented) The method of producing a gum base composition according to claim 10, which contains an acetylated monoglyceride as said emulsifying plasticizer.

15. (Previously presented) The method of producing a gum base composition according to claim 10, wherein the ratio by weight of said lactic acid polymer to said emulsifying plasticizer is from 90:10 to 80:20.